



United States Mission to the OSCE

PRESS RELEASE

Non-proliferation initiative launched at OSCE

Vienna, November 6 – U.S. Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte will deliver a keynote speech at the opening of the first European implementation workshop for the United Nations' global initiative to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and, in particular, to keep them from getting into the hands of non-State actors.

In cooperation with the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is holding an all-day workshop in Vienna on November 8, 2006 to support development of national implementation plans, identify best practices among OSCE states, and share experience. The workshop is one of a series of regional initiatives around the globe that are being planned to strengthen the international community's ability to combat and deter the spread of WMD. The source of these initiatives is UN Security Council Resolution 1540, adopted April 28, 2004 (See <http://disarmament2.un.org/Committee1540/index.html>)

This resolution call upon all states to "refrain from supporting by any means non-State actors that attempt to acquire, use or transfer nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems." UNSCR 1540 establishes binding obligations for all States and is aimed at preventing and deterring illicit access to such weapons and weapon-related materials. It is the first international instrument that deals with this threat in an integrated and comprehensive manner.

The resolution also established a committee of all of the members of the Security Council to report on implementation. To maximize outreach efforts, the 1540 Committee seeks cooperation with regional institutions such as the OSCE. The Committee chairman, UN Ambassador Peter Burian of Slovakia, is spearheading international efforts and will be coming to Vienna to participate in the workshop.

The 56 OSCE participating States have led the way internationally as a region by submitting their initial national reports to the UNSC Resolution 1540 Committee and, in most cases, have provided the Committee with additional materials. The workshop will highlight the importance of action in 2007 towards full implementation of the resolution, focusing attention on the need for nations to prepare national implementation plans next year. By early action, the OSCE participating States can position themselves to lead in the international effort to identify best practices and otherwise implement the Resolution, which can reduce the global threat posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The workshop - organized by the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation under the Chairmanship of Canada - will take place on Wednesday, November 8, at 10 a.m. at the Hofburg Congress Center (Neuer Saal). For more information see: <http://www.osce.org/item/21951.html>

The discussion panel includes:

OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut
Ambassador Gregory Schulte, US Permanent Representative to the UN in Vienna and the
IAEA [bio see: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/biog/51106.htm>]
UN Ambassador Peter Burian of Slovakia, Chairman of the UNSCR 1540 Committee
Ambassador Barbara Gibson of Canada, FSC Chairperson
John Mattiussi, European Commission Directorate General for External Relations, and
Mikhail I. Ulyanov, Head of the Russian Delegation on Military Security and Arms Control.